

the plight of the family farmer and vote for this bill.

Another unintended consequence is the precedent that we set by prohibiting the processing of livestock for any compelling reason other than we don't think it should be processed. This is a slippery slope issue. As a Congressman who represents a district where—in some counties—the cattle overwhelmingly outnumber the people and more importantly provide a living for many of my constituents, I am particularly fearful that one day a similar movement will make the argument that cattle are no longer appropriate for processing for human consumption. While it may seem far fetched, with passage of H.R. 503, we will have set a precedent that it is permissible for Congress to ban the processing of livestock for non-scientific and non-health reasons, providing those who wish to ban the processing of cattle a legal leg to stand on with either Congress or the Courts.

However, my opposition to H.R. 503 does not mean that I am not mindful of the concerns of those who live near a horse processing plant. In fact, I am extremely mindful of these people because some of them are my constituents, as I have the privilege and honor of representing the people of the City of Kaufman in Congress, which is home to one of the three horse processing plants. I believe that most of my constituents in Kaufman who are in favor of H.R. 503 are in favor, not so much because they believe Congress should criminalize horse processing, but because it means a plant in their backyard that they do not like will be closed. Many believe it is a public nuisance and a strain on the city's infrastructure. I certainly understand those reasons for supporting H.R. 503 more than those offered by Members who do not have one of these plants in their district. However, those reasons fall under the purview of local government, not the federal government.

That is why I am respectful of the decision made by the City of Kaufman and its zoning commission to order the plant closed due to it being a public health hazard. However, I do not believe that Congress should be exercising its authority and infringing upon freedom by passing H.R. 503, simply because of the City of Kaufman's bad experience with the horse processing plant. There might be a community out there that would welcome a horse processing plant and the jobs it could bring, even with the potential negative aspects associated with such a facility. Passing H.R. 503 would take the decision as to whether or not to allow a horse processing facility away from local, elected officials, and keep a local community from welcoming a plant and its jobs.

There is no doubt that a horse is a wonderful animal. For those who do not wish to process a horse, no one is forcing them to do so. In the end, I believe that it is more important to protect the freedom of livestock owners to humanely decide the fate of their livestock than it is to surrender to emotion and ban the processing of horses. This is America. We should love horses but we should love freedom even more.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT L. COLE

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of Robert L. Cole upon his retirement as the president of Peoples State Bank located in Madison Heights, Michigan.

Bob Cole has served as president of the Peoples State Bank for 10 years during which time this community bank grew from \$202 million in assets and 5 branches into a vibrant financial institution with \$500 million in assets and 12 branches in the southeast Michigan area.

Under Mr. Cole's leadership, the bank has played a major role in the local community. When a fire destroyed the municipal garage of Madison Heights in 2003, the bank donated \$5,000 for a portion of the destroyed equipment. The bank extended loans to non-profit organizations in the Detroit area assisting young people to obtain marketable work skills, provided loans to a non-profit community organization for building improvements to its Head Start program as well as donated over \$100,000 to various organizations that support affordable housing, low-income health care, food banks, homeless shelters, and small business development centers.

Bob Cole's career tracks the development of community banking in Michigan. Born in Howell, Michigan, and raised on a family farm, he graduated from Western Michigan and went to work as a banker in Fenton. In 1974, he became president of the First National Bank of Fenton. In 1987, he became president of the State Bank of Fenton and took it from \$62 million in assets to \$225 million. In 1996, he joined Peoples State Bank as president and CEO. In that role he modernized the institution, grew the bank into new communities, at the same time deepening the commitment of Peoples to serve the ethnic and small business markets of the Detroit Metropolitan area.

Bob Cole was attracted to community banking because of his strong sense of community. His involvement includes: past president of the Fenton Chamber of Commerce, Kiwanis, board of governors of the Fenton Community Center, Fenton Community Foundation, Madison Heights and Hazel Park Chambers of Commerce, past president and board member of the Michigan County Bankers, member of the Michigan Association of Community Bankers, and the Michigan Bankers Association. He is a recipient of the City of Fenton "Man of the Year" award.

Mr. Speaker, the residents of the 12th Congressional District have benefited from the leadership of Bob Cole in the field of community banking and I rise to pay tribute to his career and wish him good health and much happiness in his retirement.

HONORING FATHER JOSEPH WEITENSTEINER

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Father Joseph

Weitensteiner in honor of his retirement after almost 50 years of service to the Morning Star Boys Ranch. Through his dedication to the Morning Star Boys Ranch, and the greater Spokane community, nearly 1,300 boys have benefited from the care and oversight he has given them through the services offered by the ranch.

Father Weitensteiner's career began in 1957 when he became the ranch's first counselor. After completing studies for the priesthood, Father Joe was ordained on May 14, 1966, and was soon named Morning Star director. As director of the Morning Star Boys Ranch, many recognized Father Joe as the reason why the ranch has earned an excellent reputation for turning around the lives of hundreds of young men.

Throughout his five decades of service, Father Joe has not only been recognized for his leadership by his colleagues and Morning Star alumni, but has also been honored by numerous civic, educational, legal, and child care entities.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Father Joseph Weitensteiner for his leadership in our community and to thank him for the significant role he has played in mentoring and leading the many young men who have lived at the Morning Star Boys Ranch. I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating Father Joe as he celebrates nearly 50 years of exceptional service to our community.

HONORING JEFFREY MESTON

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise with pleasure today to honor Jeffrey Meston, one of our community's heroes. He is retiring as Chief of the Fire District in Novato, California, where his service to both the department and community has been an inspiration to all who worked with him.

Jeff started his career in 1976, working 10 years in Corte Madera and 20 in Novato. He became Chief of the Novato Fire District in 1999. His commitment to the community, to professional excellence, and to all firefighters is evident in his work. Locally, he has been president of the Marin County Fire Chief's Association and the Rotary Club of Ignacio as well as Treasurer of the Novato Chamber of Commerce. On the State level he serves as the chair of the Legislative Task Force and an Area Director for the Fire Districts Association of California and the Training Section Chief for the California Fire Chiefs Association. He is also nationally recognized as a course developer and speaker.

If you could hear him speak, as I have, you would understand why he is in high demand. In November, 2003, Jeff organized a moving memorial service for one of his own, Steve Rucker, a Novato firefighter killed battling wildfires in Southern California. He then related how he had taken Steve under his wing and added, "Steve was probably the most genuine, decent and straightforward human being I've ever known. There were never any hidden agendas with Steve—qualities which made him easy to tease, but easy to love like a brother . . . I never knew anyone who wanted to be a firefighter as much as Steve. Steve lived and breathed his dream."

After Rucker's death, which may have been caused by lack of communication with State firefighters, Jeff advocated for better systems to prevent such tragedies in the future. "Rarely a day goes by when we don't think of him (Steve)," he says.

One of Jeff's proudest accomplishments is the development of a new operating culture called "Novato Way" which asks district personnel to go out of their way to provide superior customer service, from rescuing cats to passing the hat for a resident in need of a boost. The department gives back to the community in many ways and enjoys broad support in return.

Jeff holds a Masters Degree in Public Administration, is a State Certified Fire Chief, and has completed his Chief Fire Officer Designation by the International Association of Fire Chiefs. He also helped Fireman's Fund Insurance Company craft its Fireman's Fund Heritage program which awards millions of dollars in grants to fire departments and fire and burn prevention organizations across the country each year. Jeff continues his involvement, serving on the Heritage Advisory Committee, along with other national leaders in the fire service, to provide strategic guidance for the program.

Mr. Speaker, Jeff Meston says he plans to travel in retirement—and write a fire science textbook. His experience will make the textbook an important resource, and his deep appreciation for the job our firefighters do will make it invaluable. Jeff is definitely one of my heroes.

INTRODUCING A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE COURTS OF THE UNITED STATES

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to introduce a Concurrent Resolution recognizing the independence of the courts of the United States, which I authored in response to recent "court-stripping" bills such as the Pledge Protection Act and the Marriage Protection Act of 2004. These bills threaten the foundation of American government by stifling productive discussion of social issues and undermining our system of checks and balances.

As explained in the resolution, the function of the Judiciary is to review the constitutionality of laws. It is thus undemocratic and blatantly partisan to use a procedural trick to protect certain legislation from being questioned in court. Not only does this indirectly violate the Constitution by devaluing the Judicial Branch, it also renders the entire document meaningless since constitutionality is no longer a standard by which all laws must be judged.

Moreover, as courts become functionally irrelevant when faced with certain Acts of Congress, minorities have no recourse and cannot challenge oppressive laws. The view endorsed by "court-stripping"—that a legislative vote constitutes the whole of American democracy—is myopic because it ignores that the Constitution guarantees certain rights to all, regardless of the whims of the majority. These

rights must be protected by the Judiciary. I am sure my colleagues agree with me that the popular choice is not always the right one, and that a Congressional majority is not the arbiter of universal truth.

Discrepancies between Acts of Congress and the Constitution can always exist, so a body is necessary to adjudicate conflicts between the two sets of laws. Because courts fill this vital role and maintain American democracy, I strongly urge all of my colleagues to support this important legislation.

TRIBUTE TO RABBI SOLOMON SCHIFF OF MIAMI

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Rabbi Solomon Schiff who, after more than 40 years of public service, interfaith cooperation and community achievement will be retiring from his leadership positions with the Greater Miami Jewish Federation.

By any standard, Rabbi Schiff has had a remarkable career. He has served as Executive Vice President of the Rabbinical Association of Greater Miami for 42 years and as Director of Chaplaincy for the Greater Miami Jewish Federation.

He has served as Chairman of the Dade County Community Relations Board, as President of the National Association of Jewish Chaplains and as Director of Chaplaincy for Mount Sinai Medical Center.

Throughout his career, Rabbi Schiff has been honored for his dedication and community leadership. He has been awarded the Distinguished Community Leadership Service Award from the National Conference of Community and Justice and the Peacemaker Award from St. Thomas University. Rabbi Schiff received these awards for his efforts to develop an open dialogue between the Christian and Jewish communities in the Miami area. Rabbi Schiff was recognized as the "2005 Man of the Year" by the Men's Club of Douglas Gardens and has received a Special Recognition from the Founders of the Miami Jewish Home and Hospital for the Aged at Douglas Gardens.

Rabbi Schiff also has made great contributions to the community through his service. He was appointed by President George H.W. Bush in 1992 to serve on the "We Will Rebuild Committee." This committee helped restore the areas in South Florida that were severely damaged by Hurricane Andrew. Lawton Chiles, the late Governor of Florida, appointed Rabbi Schiff to serve on a task force to study the problem of homelessness in Miami. Thanks to that task force, two new homeless assistance centers were created in Miami-Dade County. More recently, Florida Governor Jeb Bush appointed him to the Governor's Faith-Based Advisory Board.

Rabbi Schiff also has served as a guest chaplain for the United States Senate in July of 1999 and for the United States House of Representatives on several occasions.

We pay tribute to him for his service and thank his wife, Shirley, his three grown sons, Elliot, Jeffrey and Steven, and their seven grandchildren for sharing him with a grateful

community. Mr. Speaker, Rabbi Schiff has set a high standard of service for us all. I wish him happiness and success in the future.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM OSKAR GOGGINS

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 13, 2006

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor William Oskar Goggins for the kindness and influence he showed the world during his 43 years here.

Billy was born at St Mary's Hospital in San Francisco, CA on Sunday, May 10, 1963—on Mother's Day. He was the first child of Patrick & Ute Goggins, both very well-known and respected individuals in the Bay Area and beyond.

From the hospital he was carried right into a civil rights demonstration in Golden Gate Park. Billy took his first trip to Ireland at 4 years old to meet his family relatives in the west of Ireland in County Mayo. Annual family trips by car to Montana & Dakota included reunions in the Bear's Paw Mountains, hi-balling on the Iron Road, the old Great Northern Railway and running brave with Chippewa, Cree, Blackfoot and Sioux Indian friends. The Goggins' adventured on two-month road trips to Baja and the Pacific Coast of Mexico where mother Ute painted, and sisters Cathy & Aimee followed in Bill's energetic footsteps. Billy toiled in family vineyards in Germany with equally embracing relatives. These things were the soul of his education.

Over the years Bill played soccer, drew cartoons, tutored younger students from Mill Valley and Marin City, played volleyball at Stinson Beach, surfed in Bolinas, and much much more. He graduated from Tamalpais High School as a National Merit Scholar and Salutatorian.

Summer jobs were at Bancroft-Whitney legal publishers, San Francisco and Wausau Paper Mill, Wisconsin. He worked at numerous restaurants including the Book Depot Cafe and Avenue Grill in Mill Valley, and Embarko in San Francisco. He also volunteered at St. Anthony Dining Room in the Tenderloin, providing free meals for the homeless.

Bill attended Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and San Francisco State University, Departments of Communication and Philosophy. He began his vital journalism career with Frisko Kids, KALW radio, and then moved on to the old SF Weekly.

Former SF Weekly editor and colleague Andrew O'Hehir remembers, "Of course he worked harder than anyone and became essential, and in three years moved from all-purpose intern to copy editor to running the Arts & Entertainment section. I can't remember exactly when he became the go-to guy for headline copy, but I'd say that by the time he'd been there a year, he was writing half the heads in the paper."

Bill thrived at Wired for 10 years. He started as a freelance copy editor and rose to become deputy editor. Bill served as a special link between the digital industry's pace-setting magazine in the center of San Francisco's media gulch and an eager, educated national and international readership. His colleagues admired him tremendously.